



WHERE EVIDENCE AND PRACTICE INTERSECT

THEORY OF CHANGE

How do domestic violence programs promote survivors' social and emotional well-being?

FIGURE 1 on the attached page illustrates the Theory of Change guiding the work of domestic violence (DV) programs. Specifically, the long-term objective of domestic violence programs is to enhance survivors' and their children's well-being. There is ample empirical evidence demonstrating that social and emotional well-being is evidenced by: (1) self-efficacy, (2) hopefulness, (3) social connectedness, (4) safety, (5) having adequate social and economic opportunities, (6) economic stability, (7) enhanced justice, and (8) good physical, emotional and spiritual health. Domestic violence programs are invested in impacting these eight factors for both survivors and their children through efforts targeting multiple levels of change. Their work is designed not only to create intrapersonal change in survivors' thinking, belief systems, and emotions, but also to create the interpersonal and social changes necessary for the outcomes to be achieved.

Domestic Violence programs engage in a wide range of activities designed to positively impact the intrapersonal, interpersonal and social predictors of well-being for both survivors and their children. Specifically, they work to increase women's and children's sense of self-efficacy as well as their hope for the future, and directly increase their access to community resources, opportunities, and supports (including social support). Recognizing that well-being is not independent from community-level factors, staff do not focus solely on working with individual survivors. They also engage in a variety of efforts to create communities that hold offenders accountable, promote justice and survivor safety, and provide adequate resources and opportunities for all community members. This is accomplished through systems-level advocacy efforts, prevention activities, community education activities, and collaborative community actions.

Short-term improvements in survivors' and their children's lives create a positive spiral, resulting in more positive social and emotional well-being over time. While the actual programs may differ across agencies (e.g., shelter, counseling, advocacy, transitional housing, supervised visitation, children's programs, support groups), services for both survivors and their children tend to share the eight key features described in the far left column of Figure 1.

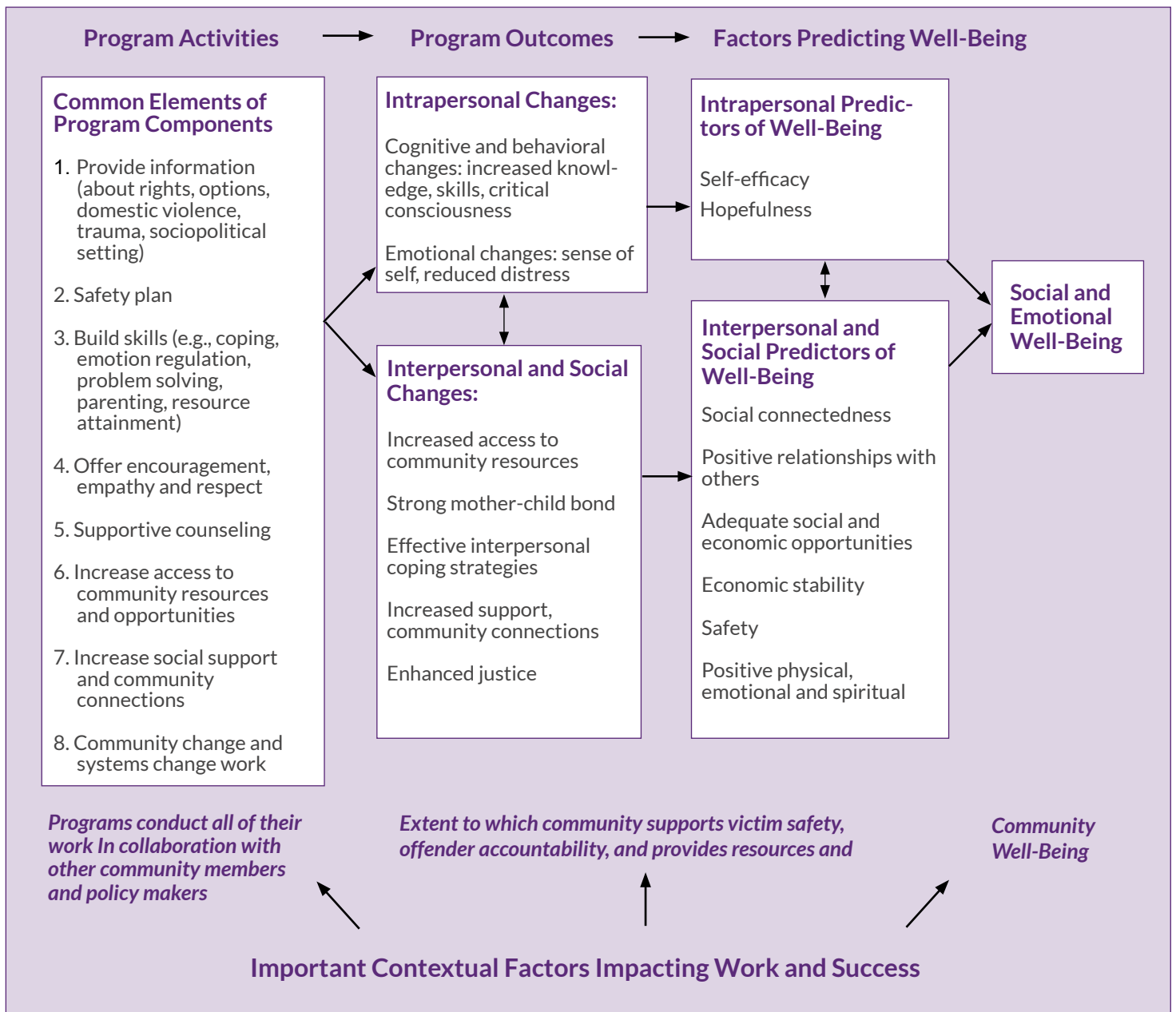
FROM: Sullivan, C.M. (2012, updated January 2016). *Examining the Work of Domestic Violence Programs Within a "Social and Emotional Well-Being Promotion" Conceptual Framework*, Harrisburg, PA: National Resource Center on Domestic Violence at www.dvevidenceproject.org.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE EVIDENCE PROJECT

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Figure 1. Theory of Change Underlying How Domestic Violence Program Activities Impact Adult and Child Survivors' Well-Being



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